Fishery Leaflet #336

# COMMERCIAL FISHERIES OUTLOOK

January - March 1962

LIBRARY
JAN 22 1962
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service - Bureau of Commercial Fisheries

## GENERAL FISHERY SITUATION

Total United States commercial fisheries catch during '61 could establish a near-record. Production during the first 9 months was 3.9 billion pounds, about 6% more than same period '60. In 1956, a record catch of 5.3 billion pounds was taken.

Imports during first 10 months '61 continued higher for most species than Jan.-Oct. '60 receipts. However, imports of all tuna except loins and discs and canned albacore, bonito, and yellowtail in brine were lower. Receipts of flounder fillets, fresh-water fillets, salmon (frozen and canned), canned crab meat, canned spiny lobsters, and fish solubles were also below Jan.-Oct. '60.

Cold-storage holdings of edible fishery products Dec. 1, '61 = 195.1 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '60 = 230.6 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '59 = 234.3 mil. lbs. Holdings of cod and haddock fillets, fish sticks and portions, fresh-water fish, and all shellfish except shrimp and oysters were higher on Dec. 1, '61 than a year earlier. Inventories of most other major species were lower.

Exports during Jan.-Oct. '61 were lower than those in same period '60 for all major species except canned mackerel, frozen shrimp, and shucked oysters. No anticipated increase in exports during this quarter.

Shrimp landings, heads-off, in the South Atlantic and Gulf States through Nov. '61 = 83.8 mil. lbs. compared with 133.9 mil. lbs., in same period '60.

Menhaden landings during first 10 months '61 = 2,130 mil. lbs., an increase of 269 mil. lbs. over same period in '60. Total '61 catch of menhaden will probably exceed the record '59 landings of 2,203 mil. lbs. A stepped-up fishing effort because of improved market for fish meal is responsible for this increase.

Wholesale price index for edible fishery products in November '61 was 141.1% of the 1947-49 average, an increase of 7.3% over November '60. There was a steady increase in prices from April thru November '61 except for slight dip in September.

## Salt-water Fish

**FISH STICKS & PORTIONS**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Combined prod. first 9 mos. '61 = 93.6 mil. lbs., 15% higher than Jan.-Sept. '60. Portion prod. same period = 42.0 mil. lbs. up 23%. Combined holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 8.9 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '60 = 8.7 mil. lbs. Continuing good demand with firm prices in first quarter.

**FLOUNDER & SOLE FILLETS**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Landings Jan.-Nov. '61 = 56.6 mil. lbs., 18% higher than in same period '60. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 5.7 mil. lbs., 24% lower than '60. Imports first 10 mos. '61 = 14.6 mil. lbs. compared with 15.4 mil. lbs. in Jan.-Oct. '60. Prices stable this quarter.

**COD FILLETS**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Light-to-Moderate
Demand - Good

Expected light landings will result in reduced inventories in first quarter. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 9.2 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '60 = 8.4 mil. lbs. Imports thru Oct. '61 = 28.6 mil. lbs. about 9% higher than same period '60. Demand should continue good with prices firm this period.

**HADDOCK FILLETS**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Heavy landings during second half '61 resulted in moderate supply in cold storage. Catch will be seasonally low in first quarter. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 10.7 mil. lbs., Dec. 1, '60 = 9.0 mil. lbs. Imports Jan.-Oct. '61 = 22.8 mil. lbs., increase 19% over same period '60. Prices steady this period.

**OCEAN PERCH FILLETS**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Landings in Maine and Mass. during Jan.-Nov. '61 = 127.2 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Nov. '60 = 135.3 mil. lbs. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 12.9 mil. lbs. compared with 14.7 mil. lbs. on same date in '60. Imports thru Oct. '61 = 3.7 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Oct. '60 = 2.1 mil. lbs. Prices should continue strong this quarter.

**HALIBUT**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Light-to-Moderate
Demand - Good

Landings U.S. and Canada thru Nov. '61 = 68.9 mil. lbs. compared with 71.8 mil. lbs. in same period '60. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 15.7 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '60 = 17.9 mil. lbs. Probable slight advance in price.

**MACKEREL, CANNED**

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Improving

Mackerel landings in '61 = 65,000 tons, highest since '57. Pack of Pacific and Jack mackerel thru Dec. '61 = 1.2 mil. std. cases; Jan.-Dec. '60 = 0.9 mil. std. cases. Exports first 10 mos. '61 were more than 3 times those in Jan.-Oct. '60.

**SALMON, CANNED**

Market - Firm
Supplies - Light
Demand - Good

Total Alaskan pack '61 = 3.3 mil. std. cases; pack in '60 = 2.6 mil. std. cases. Reds up, pinks up substantially, chums down. Imports thru Oct. '61 down 60% from same period '60. Prices continue high.

SARDINES, CALIFORNIA---------Total catch '61 = about 18,500 tons, 33% below year earlier. Sardines are large this season, no small sizes. Total case pack '61 = 400,000 std. cases. Imports sardines canned not-in-oil up 95%. Exports down considerably. Prices very firm this quarter.

Market - Firm
Supplies - Light
Demand - Active

SARDINES, MAINE----------Pack to Dec. 1, '61 = 679,000 std. cases, same period '60 = 1,970,000 std. cases. Shortest pack in 23 years. Season extended thru winter months. Prices to continue firm.

Market - Strong
Supplies - Very Light
Demand - Good

TUNA, CANNED----------Domestic tuna receipts in '61 = 164,000 tons, highest since '50. Frozen imports during '61 equal about 52,500 tons, 20% below '60, and lowest since '54. California pack '61 = 10.6 mil. cases. Imports canned tuna and bonito, Jan.-Oct. '61 = 2.8 mil std. cases; 10% higher than same period '60.

Market - Firm
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

## Shellfish

CRAB MEAT----------Prod. first quarter Gulf and Atlantic Coast expected to be good. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 2.4 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '60 = 1.6 mil. lbs. Prices will continue high. Imports canned crab meat 10 mos. '61 = 3.2 mil. lbs. compared with 3.7 mil. lbs. same period '60. Dungeness crab supplies expected to be light.

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

SCALLOPS, SEA----------Final landing figures for '61 will be over 20 mil. lbs., a new record. Some decline in prod. during first quarter. Holdings Dec. 1, '61 = 3.2 mil. lbs. compared with 3.0 mil. lbs. same date '60. Imports 10 mos. '61 = 7.6 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Oct. '60 = 6.1 mil. lbs. Prices about steady this quarter.

Market - Active
Supplies - Liberal
Demand - Good

SHRIMP----------Landings heads-off S. Atlantic & Gulf, Jan.-Nov. '61 = 83.8 mil. lbs., 37% below 11 mos. '60. Holdings frozen including breaded Dec. 1, '61 = 30.6 mil. lbs.; Dec. 1, '60 = 52.0 mil. lbs. Canned inventories low but consumer resistance to high prices. Imports frozen shrimp Jan.-Oct. '61 = 95.8 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Oct. '60 = 87.5 mil. lbs. Prices expected to remain high.

Market - Strong
Supplies - Light
Demand - Good

## Industrial Products

FISH MEAL AND OIL----------Meal prod. thru Nov. '61 = 276,000 tons; same period '60 = 251,200 tons. Imports 10 most. '61 up 53% compared with '60. Market stabilized. Prices steady this quarter. Oil prod. 11 mos. '61 = 32.0 mil. gals. up 25% from '60. Oil exports 10 mos. '61 down only 2% from same period '60. Prices steady after decline fourth quarter '61.

Market - Steady
Supplies - Light-to-Moderate
Demand - Good

## GENERAL BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Expansion in business activity continued during the last quarter, 1961. Industrial production, construction and nonfarm employment increased. Retail sales rose to new high.

Industrial production increased in November to 114 percent of 1957 average. Auto assemblies rose 15 percent in November from an October level limited by work stoppages. Output of business equipment was at a record.

Construction activity during the fourth quarter, 1961 was about 6 percent above year earlier.

Employment in nonfarm establishments reached 54.5 million in November. The automobile industry accounted for the moderate increase in manufacturing employment. Unemployment did not show the sharp rise that usually occurs in November.

Retail sales, after increasing 3 percent in October, rose 3 percent further in November to a new high. Sales of durable goods advanced as deliveries of new domestic automobiles rose to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 7.0 million from 6.2 million in October.

## THE FOOD SITUATION

Expanding economic activity points to a continued rise in consumer incomes and expenditures for food in 1962. Average retail food prices are not likely to rise much in the coming year.

Meat supplies per capita will be up seasonally in the next few months and a little higher than last year. Most of this increase will be in pork. Prospective slaughter of meat animals points towards per capita meat consumption in 1962 at about the levels of the last few years. Red meat consumption per capita in 1961 was approximately 160.6 pounds.

Dairy supplies per capita will be abundant in 1962. Continued heavy supplies expected for the year should keep retail prices at about 1961 levels. Milk production has expanded in the last 2 years after declines in 1957, '58, and '59.

Fats and Oils - For the 1961-62 marketing season now under way current indications are that total supplies of edible fats and oils (including oilseeds) will be a new record. Domestic demand for food fats during 1962, is expected to remain at about 46 pounds (fat content) per person, about the same as in recent years. Use of butter per capita probably will not be higher than last year's record low of 7.5 pounds, but the margarine usage rate may go to a record high. Retail prices for most food fat products in 1962 should not differ significantly from the 1961 levels.